

**Run Response Committee Team 1**  
**January 4, 2005**  
**1:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Attendance: Amy Lamphere, Melissa Beecher, Sheli Schindler, Lori Griggs, Joe Wright, Bob Willhelm, Sherrie Spilde, Cheri Miller, Kris Strand.**

**Committee Priorities**

Melissa passed out a list of possible priorities for the group and an analysis of statistics that were collected by LPS. Discussion on the number of youth that were gone less than one day (22.6%) along with those gone one day (32.2%) equaled 54.8% of the total run calls for 2003. This number does not include those run reports that were canceled prior to the broadcast. Sherrie asked if Cedars could hire an off-duty officer to take these reports but others thought that with this there would be the cost to consider. Bob stated that from the numbers officers put a lot of time responding to these calls. He asked if Cedars has a procedure in place of when they call a youth in on run because they don't report them missing if they don't show up to school. Cheri stated that because of the state requirements they have to call the youth in on run when they are not where they are supposed to be. Sherrie felt that this might not be the case. It was concluded that Sherrie and Merry and maybe Melissa could meet and work out a definition of a runaway and when the youth should be called in, how long they could wait and if they could first contact the parents to see when the youth should be called in on run.

**Statistics on Runaways**

The statistics were passed out for review. Sherrie was planning on looking into the statistics further to see how many of the youth were state wards. Sherrie guessed that approximately 50% of the youth on run may be state wards but would find out exactly after receiving the 2003 run database. Melissa would email everyone the database of youth on run for 2003.

Sheli stated that from the report of youth on run that they receive 20 were on run for two weeks or longer.

Melissa asked if the group if it would be helpful to have the 2004 runaway statistics and be able to compare them to the handout with the 2003 statistics. The group agreed that this would be helpful to show trends. Joe and Bob agreed to try to compile these statistics before the next meeting and forward them to Melissa for analysis.

**Information Issues**

Bob and Joe both stated that one of the major issues for law enforcement is that they spend a tremendous amount of time figuring out what to do with a runaway once they have picked them up (placement disposition). At 2:00 a.m. it is hard to figure out where the youth should go and to get a hold of anyone. It would be helpful to them if the prior placement would update them with information if it changes. For instance if a bed is no longer open for the youth update this with information on where the youth should go such

as what the mental health providers do. Law enforcement would like to be able to take this youth to the Assessment Center but cant. Lori stated that they have done a temporary hold in situations like this before. Sheli stated that the Assessment Center could take the youth. It was asked what if they are a state ward? Then they want law enforcement stay until a placement is determined. Sherrie stated that Visanet would stay with the youth. Lori stated that in both of these situations they could do a temporary hold on the youth at YAC. Bob and Joe stated that there were times when law enforcement was not allowed to leave a youth because the staff would not take them or probation would not clear it. Sheli stated that this should not be the case. Maybe one of the employees was misinformed but they will take the youth. Lori stated that there has been time when the channel 50 officer has made calls but now they should call the Assessment Center regarding a youth

Kris stated that they had called the hotline and could not get through and left a message but did not get a return call. Sherrie stated if this happens she would like to know and will address the issue.

#### **Availability of Placements / Programs for Runaways Review Current System**

Lori stated that there is a definite need for placement options for both state wards and other youth. Sherrie stated that the State has a policy in place that Cedars can call in extra staff if needed to deal with youth that have ran away. Lori stated that a 48 –72 hour option with supervision is also needed. Currently YAC has a waiting area but not a facility for extended stays. The group agreed that funding was the major issue in filling this gap. Lori stated that there is an area for 20 more beds at the Detention Center. Sheli cautioned that doing that would definitely criminalize the youth. Melissa stated that if there was a continuum of options for runaway and that option was utilized as a last resort then the criminalizing impact would not be as great and it would be less costly than putting them in detention.

Sherrie stated that it is cheaper to place a youth in Caps than it is to put them in detention. Lori stated that often a youth is at high risk and the system can't do anything for the youth until they commit a law violation. It would be nice if there were an option other than detention where a youth could be kept in a safe place until they can get evaluated.

It was suggested that someone from the group contact Vicky Weise with CCFL to see if there is funding for research in this area. Melissa agreed to call. Amy also offered her intern to help.

It was the group's consensus that an option is needed between freeway and detention. Kris and Cheri both stated that Cedars is forced to deal with youth that should not be in a shelter. There are perpetrators mixed with victims. Many times youth sit in freeway for two months.

Lori stated that there needs to be an option such as Rivendale or the Independent Center for high-risk runaways and probation would authorize the youth. It needs to be a safe place until something can be worked out to find the youth a placement.

It was stated that youth are on waiting lists for placements such as treatment level group homes.

Filings are up 34% and the dockets are full.

Sherrie stated that they would be willing to have hotline staff locate placements. Law enforcement would like it if someone would track placement options.

Sherrie stated that Judges don't want to make the youth a state ward and that they would rather work with the parents.

Bob and Joe both stated that they would like YAC to have access to tab K. They agreed to meet together and discuss how to achieve this.

**Other old or new business**

It was agreed that this group would collect more information and bring it to the next meeting and come up with a plan to address the issues.

Sherrie passed out statistics on runaways from Cedars facilities.

It was agreed that it would be good to review the current system for runaways and identify the entire process and the role of the law enforcement, Assessment Center, placement provider, HHS, and families.

**Set next meeting date:**

The next meeting will be on February 8, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. in the Human Services Conference Room 555 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Beecher